

United States Association of Former Members of Congress at 330 A Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20002. With that, Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that portions of the delegation's report be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

THE UNITED STATES ASSOCIATION OF FORMER MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

We, the four members of a delegation of the United States Association of Former Members of Congress (AFMC), visited Cuba from May 26 to June 3, 2000, to explore firsthand the current political, social and economic realities in that country and to consider what steps might be taken to improve relations between Cuba and the United States. Before traveling we were briefed by officials in the Department of State, key Members of Congress, leaders of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and officials of the Cuban Interests Section in Washington, DC. The report you hold in your hands reflects the collective deliberations of the delegation, and lists six specific recommendations that we all endorse. As you will see, we did not attempt to tackle every issue involved in relations between our countries; in order to make concrete and well-founded recommendations, we focused on a core of matters that seemed particularly significant to us.

This fact-finding trip was the third and last in a series funded by a grant from the Ford Foundation to the AFMC. The other two trips were made in December 1996 and January 1999. Our recommendations closely parallel those of the previous two bipartisan delegations. To date, 15 former Members of Congress (eight Republicans and seven Democrats) have traveled to Cuba on these Ford Foundation-sponsored missions. The recommendations of all three delegations have been unanimous and are remarkably similar in terms of their implications for U.S. policy.

Unlike the two previous delegations, we did not travel as a group officially invited by the Cuban Government. We had the appropriate documentation from the United States Government, including a license from the Department of Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control. Although the Cuban government did not extend an official invitation to the delegation, we were issued tourist visas.

The unofficial character of the visit allowed us to control our own time, to have a wide variety of meetings and to gain a much better idea of what a cross-section of the Cuban population thinks. Unencumbered by the protocol demands that normally accompany an officially approved trip, we were free to visit a range of independent organizations, art centers, church and church-sponsored groups and research centers. We were also able to attend church services, visit markets, travel into the countryside and talk freely to private citizens. The people we met with ranged from an average woman attending an Elián González rally whom we engaged in spontaneous conversation to Cuba's Minister of Foreign Affairs; from the tour guide of the Partagás cigar factory in Old Havana to the Papal Nuncio; from the director of the government-sponsored cultural organization Casa de las Américas to the head of the Roman Catholic relief organization, Caritas; from an urban planner sympathetic to the current regime in Cuba to some of the most controversial figures—including Marta

Beatriz Roque, René Gómez Manzano, and Felix Bonne—and independent journalists living in that country today.

On the ground in Cuba, we heard a remarkably diverse array of voices and observed a highly complex set of political and social circumstances; nonetheless, we submit this report in the conviction that the implementation of our recommendations can only further the interests of both the United States and the people of Cuba.

JOHN BRADEMÁS,

D—Indiana.

J. BUECHNER,

R—Missouri.

FRED GRANDY,

R—Iowa.

LARRY LARROCCO,

D—Idaho.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Our recommendations are based on our extensive discussions during our trip to Cuba. Our recommendations closely parallel those of the two previous bipartisan delegations of the U.S. Association of Former Members of Congress.

1. Congress and the administration should begin a phased reduction of sanctions legislation, as defined in the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992 (PL 102-484) and the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996 (Helms-Burton, PL 104-114). As a first step, current legislation on Capitol Hill (H.R. 3140 and S. 2382) to remove all restrictions on the sales (for gifts) of food and medicines should be enacted.

2. Serious consideration should be given to the establishment of a U.S. bank in Havana if legislation to authorize the sales of food and medicine is approved by Congress and the Administration.

3. Opportunities for people-to-people contact between citizens of the United States and Cuba should be expanded, particularly through two-way exchanges in the fields of education and culture. More links between educational, cultural and non-governmental institutions in our two countries should also be established.

4. The current ceilings on annual remittances from the United States to Cuba should be raised significantly, if not eliminated.

5. Steps should be taken to facilitate direct fights between the United States and Cuba.

6. Steps should be taken to improve Internet communication between the citizens of both countries. Initiatives aimed at enabling Cuban citizens to gain greater access to the Internet should be encouraged, and support should be given to individuals and entities involved in the creation of websites and other electronic platforms aimed at improving mutual understanding between the peoples of the United States and Cuba.

SUPPORT FOR FEDERAL-STATE PARTNERSHIPS RELATIVE TO SCHOOL MODERNIZATION

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I rise to express my strong support for initiatives to create a federal-state-local partnership relative to public school construction and renovation throughout America. At a time when unprecedented budget surpluses are being projected by budget leaders at both the White House and in Congress, it seems clear to me that some modest portion of these funds ought to be used to assist our school districts. In South Da-

kota, it has become increasingly difficult to pass school bond issues, given the fact that real estate taxes are already too high and our state's agricultural economy has been struggling. The result is an enormous backlog of school construction needs, and the costs of repair and replacement only increase with each passing year.

To propose a new school construction partnership is not to suggest some sort of "federalization" of K-12 public education. The decisions as to whether to replace or repair a school would remain with the local school districts where they belong, and by far the largest share of the expense would continue to be met by local taxpayers. Even so, a federal effort to reduce interest costs or otherwise participate in reducing the total cost of school construction could often times make the difference between a successful project or none at all. If the federal government were to simply block grant these funds, the dollars would have to be disbursed in such a broad manner that no school district would receive a sufficient amount of help to seriously make a real difference.

While I appreciate that school construction assistance must be targeted to help needy school districts first, I do want to convey my strong opinion that the eligibility requirements for a federal-local partnership should not be so restrictive as to eliminate the possibility of many of our school districts from participating. South Dakota has a great many school districts which are not completely impoverished, but yet find it almost impossible to pass a bond issue and otherwise adequately fund their education programs. This program should apply to more than just the extreme poverty situations of inner urban areas and remote rural areas. It should apply as well to the many small and medium size communities all across our country that seriously struggle with school construction and renovation needs.

I applaud and support these efforts to invest a small portion of our Nation's wealth in improved educational opportunities and facilities for all—this investment now, will result in improved academic performance, better citizenship and a stronger economy for generations to come.

VICTIMS OF GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, it has been more than a year since the Columbine tragedy, but still this Republican Congress refuses to act on sensible gun legislation.

Since Columbine, thousands of Americans have been killed by gunfire. Until we act, Democrats in the Senate will read the names of some of those who have lost their lives to gun violence in the past year, and we will continue to do so every day that the Senate is in session.

In the name of those who died, we will continue this fight. Following are the names of some of the people who were killed by gunfire one year ago today.

October 4, 1999:

Darius Bradley, 18, Baltimore, MD; Joseph Booker, 21, Chicago, IL; Vincent Dobson, 22, Baltimore, MD; Frank Garner, 22, Kansas City, MO; Larry D. Hadley, 43, Madison, WI; Joseph Hall, 20, Detroit, MI; Arthur Harris, 39, Houston, TX; Kendall Hawks, 18, Baltimore, MD; Clarence Jackson, 21, New Orleans, LA; Derrick Jacque, 24, New Orleans, LA; Jasul Johnson, 23, Philadelphia, PA; Charlotte Lindsey, 50, Memphis, TN; James McClinton, 24, Chicago, IL; Richard Mitchell, 51, Detroit, MI; Shawn Moore, 25, New Orleans, LA; Cedric Outler, 41, Miami-Dade County, FL; Zawakie Walker, 23, Detroit, MI; Darius Washington, 31, Baltimore, MD; William Wilson, 24, Baltimore, MD; and Unidentified male, 72, Nashville, TN.

We cannot sit back and allow such senseless gun violence to continue. The deaths of these people are a reminder to all of us that we need to enact sensible gun legislation now.

ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE TO WOMEN

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I would like to speak on a pending piece of legislation that I believe requires our urgent attention. The fact that the leadership has not acted to bring this bill to the floor is of great concern to me. While I understand that our time is short and our list is long, the Reauthorization of the Violence Against Women's Act should be on the list of priorities for this Congress. I urge the leadership not to allow another day to pass and to bring this bill to the floor for our immediate consideration.

In 1994, with the President's strong support, Congress passed the landmark Violence Against Women Act, which established new Federal criminal provisions and key grant programs to improve this nation's criminal justice system's response to domestic violence. Since that time, the number of crimes against women has decreased. A recent report by the Bureau of Justice Statistics shows that the number of women experiencing violence at the hands of an intimate partner declined 21 percent from 1993 to 1998. Under this bill, the Federal Government has awarded \$1.6 billion dollars, \$24 million of which went to support programs in the State of Louisiana, to help support the efforts of prosecutors, law enforcement officials, the courts, victim advocates, health care and social service professionals, and intervention and prevention programs. The National Domestic Violence Hotline, established with funds from this Act, has received more than 500,000 calls since it began operating.

While I think the success of this Act alone is an important reason to support its continuation, it is not why I stand here today. Although the number of women murdered by an intimate partner is the lowest it has been since 1976, still, 3 out of 4 victims murdered last year were female. Tremendous strides have been made, but domestic violence and crimes against women continue to devastate the lives of many women and children throughout our country.

In fact, in May of this year, one week after Mother's Day, a Louisiana woman, Jacqueline Gersfeld, was gunned down by her husband just outside a Gretna courthouse. The couple had a history of violence and friends reported that this was not the first time Jacqueline's husband, Marvin, had threatened to kill her. Far too often, abused women are afraid, and many times for good reason, to remove themselves from these abusive relationships, but not Jacqueline, she sought help, obtained a protective order and filed for divorce. She left that courtroom believing that her days of living in fear were over and that her husband could no longer harm her. But she was wrong.

I am sad to say that Jacqueline's story is not unique. In New Orleans alone, the Domestic Violence help line receives 16,000 calls for assistance a year. Of the total women's homicide rate, 46 percent of those deaths are attributed to domestic violence. And that is just one city in my state. I am certain that every one of my colleagues could come to this floor and tell of a woman in their state whose fate was that of Jacqueline's. As citizens of the greatest democracy in the world, we cannot stand idly by and watch these stories unfold. The need for the services provided for under the Violence Against Women Act are needed now more than ever. Women like Jacqueline must be protected from the wrath of their estranged abusers. They must know that there are people willing to help them and their children escape the abuse and start a new life.

While domestic violence may be dismissed by some as an issue that affects only women, it is not, it is an issue that affects us all. Studies show that a child's exposure to the father abusing the mother is the strongest risk factor for transmitting violent behavior from one generation to the next. A significant number of young males in the juvenile justice system were from homes where violence was the order of the day. Family violence costs the nation from \$5 to \$10 billion annually in medical expenses, police and court costs, shelters and foster care, sick leave, absenteeism, and non-productivity. In fact, the majority of welfare recipients have experienced domestic abuse in their adult lives and a high percentage are currently abused.

My Colleague from Delaware, Senator BIDEN, and I have cosponsored leg-

islation to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act. If Congress fails to reauthorize VAWA, many critical programs may be jeopardized. Reauthorization legislation, which has broad bipartisan support will help to: maintain existing programs, expand investigation and prosecution of crimes against women; provide greater numbers of victims with assistance; maintain and expand the domestic violence hotline, shelter, rape prevention, and education programs; and support effective partnerships between law enforcement, victim advocates and communities.

Again, I am disappointed that this Congress is quickly coming to a close and this bill is still waiting for action by the Senate. Several times during the campaign, the leadership has claimed that the issues that are important to women are of the highest priority. I can hardly think of an issue that more directly affects the lives of women and their families than their health and safety.

Since we returned from the August recess, several members have come to the floor and talked about time. The minority leader eloquently detailed the amount of time, or lack thereof, that this body has dedicated to actually doing the work of the American people. The majority leader, on the other hand, has cautioned us that time is limited and we, therefore, must use it wisely. I could not agree more—time is running out and so, it is about time that we ask the Majority to do more than make empty promises. It is about time we question the sincerity of a party when their Presidential candidate needs to be briefed before he can take a stance on legislation to end violence against women. It is about time we do all we can to make good on a promise that we made six years ago to victims like Jacqueline. While it is too late for us to help her, we owe to the hundreds and thousands of others like her to act quickly. I implore my colleagues not to let time run out for the millions of women whose lives could be saved by this legislation.

REQUEST FOR PRINTING OF THE ECSTASY ANTI-PROLIFERATION ACT OF 2000 IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, on 23 May 2000, I introduced the Ecstasy Anti-proliferation Act of 2000, now known as S. 2612. The original bill text was not printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD for that day. I am resubmitting the original text of the bill and ask unanimous consent that the text be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

There being no objection, the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows: